



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON DC 20590

June 14, 2011

The Honorable Mike Kowall
Chairman, Committee on Economic Development
Michigan State Senate
Post Office Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Chairman Kowall:

As you consider legislation to create a governmental authority that could facilitate the development of the New International Trade Crossing in the Detroit Windsor Corridor, I write to provide the view of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) on this critical project.

Since taking office, President Obama has made creating jobs and ensuring sustainable economic growth a top priority. This Administration recognizes that a critical component of stimulating economic growth in the United States is ensuring that U.S. businesses can actively compete in the global markets by increasing their exports of goods, services, and agricultural products. Improved export performance will, in turn, create good high-paying jobs. To help us reach these goals, the President established the National Export Initiative and the Export Promotion Cabinet, of which I am a member.

Ensuring that the United States has the robust transportation infrastructure necessary to accommodate projected increases in America's exports resulting from the National Export Initiative is a key role for my Department in partnership with the States. As such, DOT recognizes the need to upgrade the border crossing in the Detroit Windsor Corridor.

Currently, the Detroit Windsor Corridor carries 24 percent of the United States' trade with Canada, our largest trading partner. For the next two decades, this Corridor will continue to be the busiest land commercial international crossing in North America. During that period, annual trade is expected to double from the current annual trade levels of \$500 billion. We believe the New International Trade Crossing will be needed to provide the additional traffic lanes necessary to meet this growing demand.

Passage of the legislation under consideration today is the next step in bringing these additional publicly-owned lanes and the New International Trade Crossing to fruition. This bi-national project will result in a border system solution for the United States and Canada, creating a freeway-to-freeway connection from Michigan to Ontario, modern and efficient border inspection facilities in both countries, and a new international crossing over the Detroit River. This will provide an additional border crossing option to ensure the safe, efficient, and secure movement of people and goods across the U.S.-Canadian border to support the long-term growth of the economies of Michigan, Ontario, as well as throughout Canada and the United States.

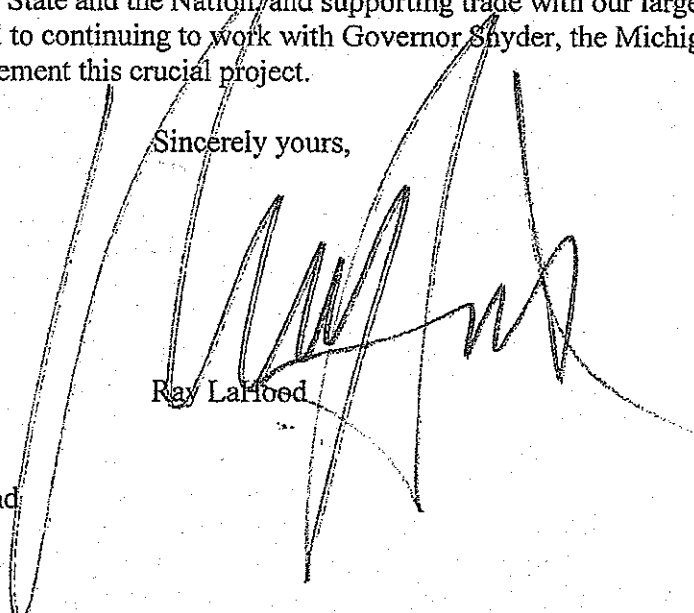
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Canada has also shown its strong commitment to this important project and our partnership by agreeing to provide \$550 million in funding. My Department will allow this funding to be used as matching funds for eligible Federal-aid highway work once the State accepts it.

I commend your leadership and the leadership of this Committee for holding hearings on SB 410 and SB 411, and the leadership of Governor Snyder for supporting this legislation. The development of the New International Trade Crossing is an important next step in both ensuring the continued prosperity of your State and the Nation and supporting trade with our largest trading partner. I am committed to continuing to work with Governor Snyder, the Michigan Legislature, and Canada to implement this crucial project.

Sincerely yours,



Ray LaHood

cc: Governor Rick Snyder
Senator Dave Hildenbrand